Sermons of the Guardian of Devotion

Volume Four

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All Glory to Sri Guru and Gauranga

Introduction

Sri Vyasa Puja Address

by B.R. Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj Nov. 9, 1982

The Lord says that, "My servant's position is also as respectable as Mine. He serves Me and he also is worthy of the same reverence and worship as I am. He is My part and parcel, a member of my family, and my family is the purest of the pure. All of My family are agents of purity and are distributing purity to the world." Purity is not only self-abnegation but the higher purity is in self-surrender. That service is not calculative nor with any motive, but it is automatic, spontaneous service: service of the beautiful, service of love divine. It is not the service of power, but it is service of beauty, love. *Satyam*, *sivam*, *sundaram. Sundaram* is the most original factor ever discovered in this world. So Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and *Srimad Bhagavatam* preached about *sundaram* , which is not mere unassailable eternal existence to be adored, and not mere consciousness of the material substance which may be discovered as a wonderful thing to be adored, but *sundaram* is the fulfillment of the consciousness. The real existence of that highest substance was given exclusively by *Srimad Bhagavatam* and then by Sri Caitanyadeva and His followers. We are worshipers of the beautiful. Reality the beautiful, reality the love, reality the harmony. That is the highest quarter of the existence and we are connected internally with that and so we must aspire after that scientifically. There is a particular method and we are to follow that. The *sastra*, the scripture, is there and the living *sastra*, the *sadhu* , the saint, is there and under their guidance we can hope to attain the highest fulfillment of life. ,Die to live."

So many proposals in the name of helping are only helping us to incur debt in this world. Already one is under the pressure of a heavy burden and again in the name of help he is securing a fresh loan and so more burden is coming on his head. This is the nature of help in this world. No work can be fully pure in this world. It may be said that at least there is good-will but we say that good-will is also impure and filthy. Everything is impure and rubbish here, but with the help of the scripture and the real agent we are to come to know what is good and what is bad. Then we are to accept the good and eliminate the bad. Previously Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu came distributing this conception and in the modern time our Srila Guru Maharaja, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada, came and almost single-handedly began his fight against the so-called existing principle of help in the environment.

The *Vedas* say, "In the garb of religion so many materialistic things are being delivered. It is a treachery to the ordinary people." We are to know what is pure religion, what is the real recommendation of the *Vedas* which has its conclusion in *Srimad Bhagavatam*. The *Veda* is likened to a wishfulfilling tree, *kalpa-vrksa*: whatever we want it can supply that. And from that has come naturally the ripe product, the ripe fruit of the Vedas, and that is *Srimad Bhagavatam* . There is no artificial color there that any scholar can come and thrust his own interpretation into the *Bhagavatam* and say, "This is *Bhagavatam's* opinion." *Bhagavatam* is not subject to the *Vedas'* or the *Upanisads'* opinions but the *Srimad Bhagavatam* has come automatically from the *Veda* tree.

One who cannot tolerate another's position is a jealous person. This *Bhagavatam* is only meant for those that are free from jealousy so that they can understand that there is only one principal Who is all in all. He is autocrat and He is all in all. He is our master and He can make or mar. Only those who have no jealousy can come to such a level as to inquire about truth. Whereas the jealous cannot admit that there is God and that the whole creation is designed and destined by Him.
There is the land of the Lord and if we can enter into that plane then we can be really happy by giving and not by exerting. To sacrifice for Him will bring for us both quantity and, especially, quality. If we can have entrance into that plane we shall be able to swim in the pool of nectar. It is very much appreciable.

We can understand that it *is* very much appreciable, that so many from foreign lands have also come being attracted by the instructions and advice of Mahaprabhu and *Srimad Bhagavatam*. So many young people have been charmed by the beauty of the teachings of Sri Caitanyadeva, *Srimad Bhagavatam* and Their agents. That they would come to join us was already predicted by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura some one hundred years ago and our Srila Guru Maharaja began the work in a humble way. After that, one of his disciples, Sripad A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, went to thee West empty-handed but by the grace of Mahaprabhu, Krsna and Nityananda Prabhu he was very much successful to push this high level of advice to the West.

Attracted by his earnest desire to distribute this nectar, the westerners have come in the hundreds to join the *sankirtana* party under the banner of the Gaudiya Math, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura and A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja. I am sure that you will be pleased at heart to find them amongst you here. They are taking all sorts of risks in their lives in order to preach these truths to the whole of the world with all the might and resources at their command. There are men of all different types who have joined this movement including bright scholars, doctors and businessmen. They are taking this message to every corner of the earth most skillfully and so we must feel and express our gratitude towards their divine attempt, and to their earnestness to know and distribute this sort of high order of knowledge of relief to the people at large.

We appreciate their presence here and their attempt and I feel that you are all of the same opinion as myself that they have encouraged us in a very extraordinary way to search. Many Indians are encouraged by their presence. They are also very inquisitive, "What is there that so many foreigners of high grades are also coming to appreciate? There must be something to be inquired." In this way so many Indian persons who are holding high positions in the worldly educated society are also coming.

So we give our thanks to those noble persons for their attempts and we pray to our Guru and Vaisnavas that their attempts may be fulfilled by Them.

Chapter One

The Four Sittings of Srimad Bhagavatam

Question: In the beginning of *Srimad Bhagavatam* events are described of Suta Goswami speaking at Naimisaranya and this is after Vyasadeva had spoken *Bhagavatam* to Sukadeva. So how is it that Vyasadeva was aware of the events at Naimisaranya?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: So many sittings of *Bhagavatam* took place. First Narada came and gave instruction by way of a ten *sloka* outline. He told Vyasadeva; "Meditate on it and give it out to the public. Elucidate these principles. Elucidate, otherwise what you have given so far will be all fruitless." So Vyasa took only those ten *slokas*, those ten verses. He meditated and wrote the principle *Bhagavatam* in a short way. He gave, "That is revered *brahma* , the highest quarter, the Krsna conception of Godhead, and that *lila* is very sweet. That is nothing of this side in *maya* , but that plane is full of transcendental, sweet pastimes." Vyasadeva managed to call his son, Sukadeva, and in Badarikasrama he taught him: "Although my inclination was towards this non-differentiated *brahman* conception, my father managed to teach me this *lila* of *Bhagavan* Krsna. Today I shall talk about that to you in this great assembly."

So Sukadeva received Srimad Bhagavatam from Vyasadeva. Previously Narada gave it to Vyasadeva, and Vyasa composed it in elaboration and taught it to Sukadeva: this was the second recitation. The third was when Sukadeva delivered lectures with his remarks to the great assembly of scholars in Sukartala.

When Sukadeva gave lecture there was one Suta Goswami who was a very sharp hearing man, *srutidhara. Srutidhara* is one who having only once heard something keeps it in his memory, and Suta, having those qualities, was present in that meeting. The fourth sitting was in Naimisaranya where the *rsis*, apprehending the black march, of *Kali-yuga*, commenced and engaged themselves in a one thousand year campaign, *yajna*. Finding Suta Goswami they told, "We have got much leisure in the evening to hear about the Absolute and we heard that you, Suta, were present in that mysterious and famous assembly where Sukadeva gave his lecture about *Bhagavatam* and you memorized it. We request that you deliver by way of lecture to us that *Bhagavatam*." Suta Goswami accepted their proposal and that was the last sitting in the form of regular evening lectures. Sixty thousand or so *rsis*, the scholars and performers of sacrifices, assembled to hear from him. It was after this sitting that Vyasadeva took the whole thing and compiled it in book form and let it loose on the public.

Question: What is that Sukartala that you mentioned just now?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Sukartala is a small district of Uttar Pradesh just opposite Vibhukuti, a little far off from the Ganges, where there was the place of Maharaja Pariksit. When Pariksit was sure to die he came to live in that place near the Ganges, and there the third assembly took place. Perhaps it was from Suka that the name Sukartala has now come, and by that name this place is known to the public.

Question: Was Vyasadeva present at Naimisaranya when Suta spoke?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: No, he was not present in the meeting, but he got information. He was a *yogi*. Vyasadeva was such a *yogi* that he could understand and feel whatever is happening anywhere. In this way the whole battle story in Mahabharata has been described by him. How it is possible? Not only that but he was a *yogi* of such higher class that he could transfer his *yoga-sakti* to Sanjaya who, inspired by that potency, could also feel that battle. He could observe so many things simultaneously: what one is saying to another, what weapon one is throwing to another, all these thing's Sanjaya could see simultaneously and he is relating the whole thing to Dhrtarastra by the grace of Vyasadeva. Vyasadeva is able to see many things simultaneously in his *yoga* -developed consciousness.

Once one gentleman told me that Einstein in his last days was asked by his wife, "What invention are you searching now?" He replied: "If I am successful in this campaign of my research then you will be able to see me wherever I am. Wherever I shall be you shall be able to see and feel me. That plane I am going to try to invent." That was Einstein's last tendency according to one gentleman, though I don't know how far it is true.

Many devotees are also said to realize such a position that from a separate place they can detect when a dog is entering within a particular temple in Vrndavana. He is feeling, "Oh, a dog is entering there." When our plane of consciousness, our conscious seat, is not disturbed by any self-produced thought, when it is clear, then when any wave carrying any news strikes it, it can feel that, "This is happening somewhere else and the wave has come to touch the aerial of my consciousness." When our conscious seat is very clear any wave that arises to touch it, any fact that arises in our plane of thinking, that cannot but be an actual fact. But when self-produced prejudices have covered the conscious seat then we cannot detect such things the plane of our consciousness cannot be read. But when that is cleared, any incident happening anywhere sends some wave to every "receiver" and each can understand, "Oh, such thing is happening!" Useless thoughts and false thoughts do not arise in his mind. Whatever is happening is sending some wave, his mind is so clear that be detects that event. He reads his mind, he feels it and he says, "Oh, this is happening here and that is happening there." It may be considered something like that.

But this is a kind of *siddhi*, mystic power. A true Vaisnava avoids all these things, but automatically it may come to someone and sometimes they may disclose this fact otherwise they avoid all these things. They do not want miracles. They are eager to find out the miracle of the center, the central miracle. They are busy to search for the miracle of miracles, and so these side issues they neglect. They are all-attentive to find out the main problem. Their cent-per-cent energy is engaged for that, concentrated, without caring for these things.

Question: Srila Sridhara Maharaja, when Sukadeva was asked to speak *Srimad Bhagavatam* he was in the presence of his *guru*, Vyasadeva, and *param-guru*, Narada. So how is it that he took the exalted seat of the *vyasasana* in the presence of his *guru* and *param-guru*?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Sukadeva was not asked to speak *Bhagavatam*, only Pariksit Maharaja prayed, "What should be the duty of a man who is surely going to die very soon? How should I utilize my energy that it may help me after death? Certain death is approaching towards me and so how can I utilize my time best?"

So many *rsis*, authorities of different departments, were recommending to him differently, and he was perplexed. He told, "You give some unanimous verdict to me. I have no time so please you give some unanimous instruction." At that time by chance Sukadeva arrived there at the meeting. Sukadeva was a man of fable; many had heard about him, about this peculiar realized soul. "He is a boy of sixteen but he has got no feeling about this world which is so charming to all of us. We are trying our hardest, our best, to get out of the entanglement of this charming world but we find that we fail at every step. However, that boy, Sukadeva, has crossed the line of *maya* and always is in continuous conception of the conscious world. He is quite ignoring these material things and he does not even find the necessity of a cloth around his waist. Even he has got no distinction in his mental eye as to whether one is a woman or a man. He is so highly and firmly established in pure spiritual conception that even the beautiful girls do not feel any necessity to cover the parts their of body."

He was like a fable to the gathered sages. So when Sukadeva appeared they all rose in honor of him. Sukadeva is not caring for anything there and when he entered, all the *rsis* told to Pariksit Maharaja: "Maharaja, you are very fortunate: this *mahatma*, who we all seek to have *darshan* of, has come. You please ask your question to him, and we are all eager to hear something from his lips." So they all unanimously put Sukadeva in the presidential chair. They all took their seats and Pariksit asked him, "I am just approaching certain death so what is my duty? How should my duty be couched in order that I can have my highest benefit in the least span of time?"

Sukadeva began to answer and everyone there in pin-drop silence began to listen to his words. His words were coming unquestionably as the absolute truth and were unanimously accepted by all. Present in that assembly were all the big scholars who had come to give some consolation to Pariksit Maharaja, "You are such a good Maharaja with good administration. You are unparalleled as well as a lover, respecter and protector of the brahminical *yajna*, faith, etc. Despite all these qualifications you have been thrown a curse from that same side of the *brahmana* section, and that is a very lamentable thing." In this way almost all the leaders of all different schools of philosophy came to give consolation to Maharaja Pariksit. It was in that well-represented assembly that Sukadeva was to speak.

Narada and Vyasadeva knew well that, "What we are trying to inaugurate, which seemed to be a very narrow and bigoted thing, when Sukadeva will speak this *Bhagavatam* he will give it in a very extensive way and with the widest color."

Narada expressed, "I gave ten poems as ten outlines to Vyasadeva and he elaborately taught that to Sukadeva. Sukadeva has got some extensive credit and. honor amongst all the types of scholars. Coming in that broad view and percolated by his *brahma* conception we are eager to see how this elaborated *Srimad Bhagavatam* shall be delivered to this world retaining its transcendental characteristic. In order to do away with any mundane misconception it must pass through Sukadeva otherwise people may think this to be mundane. He has got the broadest conception of view and his qualification is admitted from all sides."

Narada and Vyasadeva were present and eagerly waiting. Happily they tasted how through *brahma-jnana*, through the widest touch, this Krsna- *lila*, which seems to be of very limited and narrow things passes through to be widely accepted.
All these gentlemen for seven clays attended this meeting and they all listened with such eagerness.

Sukadeva told, "From my father, from my dear affectionate father I have learned these things." And giving warning to the audience he told, "You all know that I have no bigoted conception about religion. The broadest conception of religion I possess and I am famous for that. I have got contact with the *brahma*. *Brahma* means the biggest, the greatest plane: the higher, widest plane. I am already settled in that consciousness so what I say don't take it as mundane happenings of this limited world, but it is coming from the other side. That is beyond *Brahmaloka* and has attracted me. I have got no charm for anything of this mundane world. I am well established in the transcendental world. I shall give delivery to you all of what attracted me and what I have noted and studied, and that is fully transcendental. With this warning I give delivery of all these things, of Krsna- *lila*. You should take it that Krsna's pastimes are broader, wider, higher and deeper things in the transcendental world. You must take it like that." Now and again giving this warning Sukadeva is delivering the whole thing, and Narada and Vyasadeva are reflecting: "Yes, we are successful!"

In his introduction to *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Vyasadeva has written there, "Originally this Srimad Bhagavatam is a very good thing, but still its beauty is enhanced by the commentary that has come from the mouth of Sukadeva. The *Bhagavat* knowledge modified and ornamented by the knowledge of Sukadeva has got a wider view and that universal truth will be easy for all sections of the religious school to accept."

So, knowingly it was that the *guru* and *param-guru* of Sukadeva were present there. They knew the future and could understand that this recitation would occur, and also out of sympathy for Maharaja Pariksit they came. They did not come by chance.

Chapter Two

The Free Flow of The Absolute

Srila Sridhara Maharaja: I must feel that I am unsatisfied with the environment of this world: life, death, torture and all these things, *janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi*. If one is really a sincere seeker of a happy life, then he must try with his utmost endeavor to get freed from this environment and to find another place: home. Back to God, back to home. And we are told from ancient times that we have got a home and that that home is under the cooling shade of the holy feet of our Lord.

Practically we must take into our program and in our daily schedule, wholesale, how to get out of this nasty colony and go back to our home, sweet home. And why is it sweet? We are to discuss that with all our intellect. Although intellect is not qualified to know about that, but still in the negative way also we can calculate that the positive is there. In that plane they are eager to take us in. They are honest. So we want to live in that plane as our country because they are honest. There it is infinite and no population will be suppressed there.

This plane here is not worth living in, so we must search for a place worth living in, and in the quest for that land we may pass lives after lives. In this search there is no loss because where we are at present is undesirable, and if we are sincere in this feeling then to search for what is desirable is not madness. We may pass lives after lives in search of a sweet home and there will be no waste of energy in that endeavor. This is not unreasonable, rather we find that this is finely reasonable.

Sastra and *yukti*. First is the *sastra,* revealed scriptures, the positive contribution. Then next, and subservient, is reason, *yukti*. Logic is subservient, and the positive extension from the world of truth is the real thing. That is the main thing and logic will be subservient: by logic of this domain we cannot know anything about the transcendental realm.
Logic may be applied here but the logic of chemistry may not work in the logic of theology wholesale. Everything has got its own logic. The transcendental world has got its own logic but this mundane logic may help us partially, as an analogy.

To understand about the five planes of knowledge is infinite. Every unit is infinite. Infinite minus infinite, remaining is infinite! So the infinite world is such that we are always in a relative position in the infinite. The infinite can never be finished. Everywhere there is center, nowhere there is circumference.

Mahaprabhu Himself says, "I am hankering for the truth, I have not got it." Truth is so wonderful, so wonderful an attainment that Mahaprabhu, the highest, the Infinite Personified, He comes to teach us and He also says that, "I am only near the verge." Similarly Newton told, "I am collecting a few pebbles from the sea-shore, the ocean of knowledge is extended before my eyes. I know more than you, because you, you fool, you say that I have finished knowledge, but it can never be finished, only it can be touched, touched in a point." Newton told like that about the scientific knowledge of this world. So, what about the infinite knowledge, how it should be! With what aspiration and patience and hope we are to approach that world! If Newton in the science of this mundane world can say like that, then we who always speak of the higher infinite, what audacity do we have to think, that by impatiently passing a few minutes or a few days or by

stepping forward a few yards, we shall be able to know the Infinite! We are traitors to ourselves, we are not approaching the Infinite! We should not have so much courage, and so much sincere hope for the best to get it, wanting only an easy result. We must be prepared. We are out for the Infinite, and we really must want to utilize ourselves and not for *our* satisfaction. "Die to live," Hegel told. "Ideal reality" is the name of his philosophy. Really, the ideal is real: ideal realism. Everything begins with idea and then it takes shape, it materializes.

"He is for Himself", Hegel told, "Everything is for Himself, and we are for Him."
We are for Him, we are to search for our master and not for a servant, not an order-supplier or a canvasser, but master. And the master says, "Prepare yourself for My service to satisfy Me; for My satisfaction come to be available to the complete degree. Now that you have come within, you say that you will be allowed to steal something and go away? No! All rights reserved. All rights reserved: it is not very easy to have rights, to establish rights here in My plane. I am such a master? I am an autocrat. Because I am omniscient, I am an autocrat. You are vulnerable and I am the guardian, the strong guardian.

"Try to put trust in My universal guardianship first. By understanding that I am your guardian you will find peace within you. I am your well-wisher.

bhoktaram yajna-tapasam, sarva-loka-mahesvaram
suhrdam sarva-bhutanam, jnatva mam santim rcchati
(Bhagavad-gita, 5.29)

"I am the center of distribution of goodness, I am over all: if you can think in such a way, then you can find peace within you wherever you may be. I am everything but I am your real well-wisher at the same time. I have no apprehension from anyone, whoever he is and whatever position he may hold."

Question: How are we to understand that Krsna is an autocrat, despot, liar, *and* our well-wisher?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: He is an autocrat because law comes from Him. The autocrat is above law, law emanates from Him. When there are many there is law. When there is only one, there is no necessity of law. Are you satisfied?

Question: Yes. Then, He is a despot?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Despot, but Absolute Good! If there would be any check in His despotism then the world would be the loser, the environment would be the loser. Goodness must have its full-fledged flow. Is it bad? Can there be any objection to that?

Goodness must have its freedom to flow anywhere and everywhere. "The Absolute Good", we say, then what can we lose by giving Him autocracy'? Should the autocracy be with the ignorant and the fools? Should the fools and the mischievous have autocracy? No! The Absolute Good must have full autocracy. Not that law will go to bind His hand for then we will be the loser.

Question: Then, He is a liar?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes, liar, to entice us because we cannot understand the whole truth, the Absolute Truth. So in order to entice us gradually, to draw us forward, He has become a liar. If He is all-goodness then everything emanating from Him cannot but be good. Defect can only be found in other quarters. He is the owner. Everything belongs to Him. *We* are encroachers. He is not an encroacher although He shows sometimes in that way. But that is His play, *lila*, and everything belongs to Him. His lying is good. Whatever He says, is so: "Let there be water" and there was water, "Let there be light" and there was light With such potential power at the center, can any lying be there?

Question: If He is all these things; despot, autocrat and liar, then how can we understand that He is also our ever well-wisher?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Why in this world has He given you freedom? Because free choice is necessary for feeling happiness, otherwise He is one whole, He is everywhere, with no separate individual position. If you are to conceive any separate interest, separate individuality, then freedom is indispensable. Free cooperation can give you real happiness, but if freedom is snatched from you, you become a stone. Is that desirable? Is there any dearth of stones? Then?

Endowed with freedom, free choice to choose the good and dismiss the bad. Then should it be thought that everyone will be bad, so that then no free choice will be given to anything? Is this desirable?
So realize all these things within yourself and try to adjust with the center. It is not that we are all right and we must trace some defect in Him: we are not to foster that attitude. But *He* is all-good and the defect is in us. By conferring free choice within us He has not done wrong. We are to find that out. If there is not freedom of conception in us we cannot have the position of enjoying happiness.

Question: Then, " *aslisya va pada-ratam pinastu mam ...*"

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: From so low you are going to so high! *Aslisya va pada-ratam pinastu mam* . What do you want to say there?

Question: Is it just a manufacturing of our own mentality? Is it just our own conception that He has abandoned me? Or that He is here or He is not here? Or that He is with me or He is not with me?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: He is always with you, but still He is not with you at all. He is always being in the background and He is not in the positive foreground. I cannot find Him because finding is of infinite character. He is infinite and my position is very meager, so I can never be satisfied.

He is with me in the background as the infinite character, but I only have my meager conception therefore just how much can I get of Him? But I know the fact that He is bigger and bigger whereas I am finer and finer. So satisfaction and dissatisfaction are both contained: it cannot but be. The infinite character is in the background and the finite character is before me. Because I have

got small existence, how can I take part of Him? What I can have in my possession of Him, that is very meager: the background says " This is nothing," So many others are also there. So many are holding higher positions, and that is also a relativity: relative life. Parts are always within the laws of relativity, including ourselves. In this material plane we are unsatisfied. If I have got one state then I want
to conquer the whole world, then I want to conquer the whole solar system: there is no end. Even in connection with the physical infinite we aspire to hold a higher position, and in the spiritual plane it is also such.
There is also the realm of the type of satisfaction of losing one's personality and entering into deep, sound sleep. That is found in Brahmaloka and Viraja. On one side of that we get good, and on the other we get bad. The property for exploitation is infinite, and the realm of service to the master, competition, that is also infinite.- To have an individual position necessarily means to be in the environment of infinite, Good or bad. Healthy or diseased.

Question: What is Brahmaloka?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Brahmaloka is where we lose our material ego, material individuality, but do not get our spiritual individuality. Brahmaloka is the marginal position. It is no-man's-land. The other side is in touch with the other realm and this side is in touch with this plane: something like that. It is the border, the margin between the two. On one side is consciousness, and on the other side is matter. One side is light and one side is darkness. Just as in the evening, light and darkness are combined.

Question: Are Sankara and Buddha citizens of no-man's-land?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes. One is on this side, nearing the land of exploitation and the other is nearing the land of dedication: Brahmaloka is a little higher than Viraja. Viraja is the watery characteristic of *prakrti.* Whereas Brahmaloka is light, *purusa* .

Tat lingam bhagavan sambhur . In the *Brahma-samhita* it is told that a ray of light is coming to this watery substance. This watery substance is compared to *prakrti .Prakrti* means this external potency, the potency on which the misconception arises and from which it is born. There some movement is created and the ray within is sown amongst the misconceived things without. There is a free combination and this world emerges from that common material, *mahat-tattva* .

mama yonir mahad-brahma, tasmin garbham dadhamyaham
sambhavah sarva-bhutanam, tato bhavati bharata
(Bhagavad-gita, 14.3)

"O Bharata, material nature, known as *pradhana* , is the womb into which I cast the seed (in the form of the individual soul which is born of the marginal potency) From that place, all beings headed by Lord Brahma are generated."
Aham bija-pradah pita: "I am the seed-bestowing father." *Tat lingam bhagavan sambhur*: "And Sambhu is My sense that gives birth." That may be taken as Sambhu, Siva; the part of the Supreme that is coming within this *prakrti* and moving it, producing this world in the negative side.
The world of luster must be scrutinized and analyzed and we shall find that so many units are there. So many souls are there but all are serving units, and I also can be enlisted and allowed to

enter there amongst them. In Vaikuntha, the life of the plane of dedication, we can be newborn there and have our position.

Question: Is that the fourth plane and fifth plane of attaining knowledge?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It is the third plane. The third plane Sankara recommended as the marginal position, and the fourth plane Sri Ramanujacarya recommended as the power-controlling, calculative service of the Lord in awe and reverence. Then the next higher and most all-embracing solid circle is Goloka. Goloka means something like a football: a four right-angled solid circle where there is no crookedness. There we find that, and that is the deepest plane spreading all through, all pervading. That is Goloka. It is the all-pervading, all-embracing, and finest plane. That is the plane of love and beauty and automatic service. Automatic, not calculative. That is the plane of Krsna: the most universal, the most capturing, the widest and the finest. Beauty is reigning there; the queen of love is managing there by Her potency,

The potency there is *ahaituki-apratihata*, causeless and continuous. There is *Svayam-Bhagavan* and *Mahabhava*. the highest conception of negative and the highest conception of positive, combined, of the highest quality. And that is love and beauty: it is their reign, their kingdom. It has been found out, and it is given to us by *Bhagavatam* and Mahaprabhu, that beauty is controlling. Love is controlling: that land is such. If we are tempted by that, we are to try for that. Only the attraction which originates from that plane can take us there. Agents from that plane come here, float on the surface, and give us an injection so that we can gradually move towards that direction. They give the injection of prospect. Such prospects there are! Will you come to take a certificate to enter into that plane?

It is from that plane, really from that plane, that the sound of the holy name emanates. By following that sound we can be led there but if an imitation sound comes it may take us to some other plane and finish there. The sound, has got so much depth. Like the homeopathic pill, apparently so many globules are one and. the same but the potency within is all-important.

Vaikuntha nam grahana: not mundane sound, but we are to differentiate according to the depth of meaning in the sound. The word contains what depth of potency within? What depth of good will and knowledge? That very fine thing within the sound will exert itself ultimately and not the sound vibration only. The sound containing the *bhava* , the meaning, that is everything and that is very important.

Question: The ninth offense against the holy name is to preach the glories of the holy name to the faithless. Is it an offense to give the holy name or a conception of the spiritual realm to the Sankarites, the Saivites and other impersonalists?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The field must be favorable for the seed to grow, otherwise good seed cast onto the stone will be useless. *Sraddha*, the *sisya*, and the *guru*, each must be proper and those symptoms have been given in the scripture. The healthy *sisya* attitude (disciple attitude) must be there and also the field must be cultivated in a certain way. The soil and the seed, they both must be proper, then the crops will grow.

Question: You mentioned once that the name can become counterfeit like shooting a gun using a blank bullet. Could you explain that please?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: If there is only sound it is something like many globules of homeopathic pills without any medicine: mere globes. Mere sound, but nothing good within, will do the work of globules of sugar only, but not of medicine. Do you follow? The globules made of sugar, but having no medicine within, will have what effect? If we take that sort of globule of homeopathy without any medicine within, what will be the result? No effect. Similarly the mere letters of the name and not the name itself, will not be able to produce anything good. *Namaksara bahiraya bate* is the cover-sound; the sound without any real meaning within it. And because the real purpose and the real good is not behind the sound it will produce false effect.
You are sending letters with inquiry. Are all the points finished?

Question: No! In the last letter I wrote there is a question about something I think Narada Muni said. How can we understand that the demon can cultivate more intensity than the devotee'?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It is easy to get more intensity in that section of lower purpose. That may be easily granted, but that intensity is of less quality. That takes them only to the verge, that Brahmaloka circle.

Rupa Goswami has harmonized it in his explanation.

yad arinam priyanam ca, prapyam ekam ivoditam
tad brahma-krsnayoraikyat, kiranarkopama-jusoh
(Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu, 1.2.278)

Just as there is the sun and its ray, there is similarly Krsna and Brahmaloka, the ray of His domain. The *asuras*, they get their final shelter in Brahmaloka, *kirana* ; the world of luster. And the devotees, they enter into the transcendental cosmic area according to their choice and their innate quality. The gradation is there in His family and in His paraphernalia.
A maidservant enters a room by a door and a newlywed wife also enters by the same door but each occupies a far, far different position from the other.

kamad dvesad bhayat snehad yatha bhaktyasvare manah
avesya tad-agham hitva bahavas tad-gatim gatah
(Bhagavatam, 7.1.30)

It is easy to capture more intensity in the lower quality, but in the higher order it is difficult to attain. So, easily the lower section get their sanction but it is hard for the devotee who wants to enter into the harem of Krsna amongst His internal servants: that is a little difficult. It is common sense.

The oneness of Krsna is not all one and the same. One is on the outskirts of the compound and another is at the very center of the compound. Difference is there: this is to be discriminated and Rupa Goswami has given the solution. The solution of originality of harmony has been given by Rupa Goswami in *Laghu-bhagavatamrta* which is most critical. There it is given: *sevonmukhe hi*

jihvadau, to take the name or do any service must have that one quality present to be named as devotion: the serving tendency must be there, otherwise the external show is not the real thing. "I am taking the name, a hundred crores of times" or all these things, it is all lip-deep and that won't fetch any higher value. But the depth must be considered. The intensity must be reckoned and that will lead us to get Krsna. According to that reckoning we may get to the outskirts of Krsna's domain or we may be allowed to enter into His confidential realm; this sort of consideration is there. So this is the way to harmonize things, good and bad. It is not one and the same, because it is, after all, a discriminating, differentiated plane, not a static hazy one. Krsna means differentiation. When Krsna is at the side of Srimati Radharani He is fullest, and when Krsna is at the side of other *gopis* He is one degree less.

In so many ways His attitude or His presence is measured by the devotees. How much intensity? How much love? There is also differentiation there in Vrndavana: in many, ways there is always differentiated character.

Question: Sometimes we feel the intensity very strongly...

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: What to speak of us, we are to understand these principles first. To attain to that position is imaginary and a story-like thing; like a fable. First let us enter into the area.
But we need not be discouraged; grace is there! Grace has got no limit. There is no fear of being bankrupt about Krsna. There is no question of Krsna being bankrupt there! Infinite! But to our faith it is difficult, very difficult, to get that, but His grace is there. Grace is not conditional for it may come to any place. No, one is sufficiently low that he cannot get His grace. Grace is free, it can embrace anyone. The most fallen may be graced and one who is puffed up with his own qualities may be neglected.

prema marta nityananda krpa-avatara
uttama, adhama, kichu ne kare vicara
(Chaitanya charitamrita, Adi 5.208)

Sri Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami, the author of *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta,* says, "Nityananda Prabhu is mad in His distribution. in His magnanimity. He does not stoop so low as to consider that, 'This one is qualified, this one is not.' Sometimes the flood comes and inundates everyone: His movement is such." Sri Kaviraja Goswami continues, ‘Only that chance captured me. It was not by any consideration of my capacity or my fitness, but by some causeless inundation the flood came and captured me: the flood from Nityananda Prabhu, by His grace. This is my position. Shamelessly I am giving an announcement that I have got a drop of the grace of Nityananda otherwise I would be faithless. Faithless! I have got Rupa, I have got Sanatana: that is to say that I have got appreciation for these stalwarts, these devotees. That I have got this and that, I cannot deny, and what I am giving to you in this scripture is not possible without grace. It is high. I can never deny that this; that what I am giving here is high. What is given through me in this book, *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* ; is of the highest order. If I don't say so then I would be faithless and unthankful. But it is not mine, it is extended to me by the higher authorities by their causeless mercy. It has captured me. I have been selected as their instrument, as their means. I feel that what is there is of a very pure and high type but I cannot claim it to be my own, it is someone

else's property. It is resting in me, it can be withdrawn at any moment. It is so uncertain, but still it *is*, I can't deny, and it is the most beautiful thing, that also I can't deny."
Grace means independence. Grace means separate independence of the giver.

Chapter Three

Truth by Installments

Question: How do we reconcile the fact that in some *sastras* it says that Siva is supreme?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Siva is a type who is inquiring after something but Visnu is a type who has everything within. Siva is searching.

The *sastra* says differently for different sections according to their capability of catching the truth. In the primary literature it may be said that the sun is fixed and the planets are moving but in higher astronomy it may be said that the sun is also moving, with all the planets also moving around it. But to the children the whole truth may not be said. The truth is given partially, and by installments. *Sastra* has adopted this policy of giving things by installments in order that it will be acceptable accordingly by the different sections. Then when they will reach to that standard the *sastra* will come to say, "This is not the end, my boy. You will have to go further." This policy has been adopted in the *sastra* by the givers of the revealed truth.

loke vyavayamisa-madya-seva
nitya hi jantor na hi tatra codana
vyavasthitis tesu vivaha-yajna
sura-grahair asu nivrttir ista
(Bhagavatam, 11.5.11)

Partially, by installments, the truth is being distributed to them because they cannot accept the whole truth. They cannot understand the whole truth at once. The scripture advises that, "If you want to be united with the ladies, then marry and in that way go on. If you want to take fish and meat, then you dedicate it to a certain deity and in society you take it partially under the direction of a particular company who will make such arrangements. Your merit will be given to that animal whose body you are taking, but go on in contact with that company and take meat." The advice is meant like that.

Similarly: "If you want to take wine, then first offer it to such-and-such god and then take it." But it is not that, "You do not want it but I am forcing it on you." Rather, "Because you cannot imagine your existence without the help of these things I am giving some provision to you under some restriction. Then again I will come and take you up to the further, higher advice: 'Now take this!'"
Then, presently the *sastra* tells, "Already for fifty years you have been trying to enjoy, now come to the life of renunciation: give up everything. Come and devote yourself exclusively in the search for the future life in a scientific way." In this way the progressive steps are given. Human life itself is gradually progressing: first there is student life, then household life, to work, then the third life is for retirement, and the fourth life, *sannyasa* , is for giving up everything and going on independently. In this way there is classification in the human life.

In the section of the Puranas known as the *Saiva* Puranas it tells that Siva is supreme. The Puranas are divided into three. In all there are eighteen in number: six are *sattvik*, the upper division, six are *rajasik*, the middle division; and six are *tamasik*, the lower division. This classification is

mentioned in the Puranas. In *Gaudiya-kanthahar* you will find mention of all these things: the classification of the Puranas. Some are meant for the lower, some for the middle and some for the higher sections of society. For this purpose the Puranas are divided into three groups of six. *Vedartha-puranat*: the Puranas are supplementary to the meanings of the Vedas, the higher revelation scriptures. The Puranas are called Puranas because they make the meaning of the *Veda* full. According to the degree and capacity of the people, *sastra* has approached in different levels.

Question: So can we say that the Puranas are giving a lower conception?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Some Puranas are giving the lower or minimum conception: "The minimum is that you do this." The Manu-samhita says: "I am giving a list of fishes by name: 'Eat these particular types of fish but do not take these other species.' That does not mean that without fish if you go on then that will he bad. But because you cannot do without taking these things, because it is inconceivable for you to go on with your life without taking these things, I am giving the advice, 'That type will create some disease, that one will create some mischief, that one even more mischief, therefore the less mischievous things you should take.' But my underlying meaning is that I shall call you after some time, 'Go up!'. That indomitable spirit is within you to get all these lower things, so I must at least advise you to do something. *(Pravrtti-esa bhutanam)"*

The Upanisads make the analogy of riding on a horse. The horse is running towards a particular direction and, although the rider pulls on the reins, the horse won't come back. Then he is allowed to go at his free-will for some time and then again the rider draws on the reins In this way, after some attempts, the horse will come back on course: it can be turned. In the Upanisads it is mentioned that our ego is running like the horse. This body is a chariot and the senses are like horses taking me towards their particular wrong directions, But I shall try to take them, to alter their course to some other direction. They may not care for me so what to do but let them go a little ahead for some time. But I shall try again and again and eventually I shall see that the horse is responding to my command.
The indomitable tendency towards this exploitation is here *(pravrttir-esa bhutanam)*. But what to do except give it all up and go to the other side beyond indifference and abnegation *(nivrttis tu mahaphala)* . And that is proper adjustment.

yajnarthat karmano ’nyatra, loko 'yam karma-bandhanah
tad-artham karma kaunteya, mukta-sangah samacara
(Bhagavad-gita, 3.9)

Everything should be connected with the center otherwise you will be responsible for exploitation and thereby get reaction. But if you can connect everything according to the scripture, according to the rules to deal with the center, then you are relieved from your local responsibility, You must work in the central intensity and the center will make adjustment.

Question: Is the *varnasrama-dharma* system given in the Puranas?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes, it is in the Puranas.

Question: Is it given in the *sattvik sastra* but not in the *rajasik* or *tamasik sastra* ?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: In each of the *tamasik*, *rajasik* and *sattvik* scriptures *varnasrama-dharma* is both included and classified. But *sattvik* is also not *nirguna*, but the *nirguna* campaign may be begun from any post of *varnasrama*. A *sudra* may come to have direct connection with the center whereas a *brahmana* my not accept and he will have to turn again to go downwards. It is revolving like this, like a wheel going up, and coming down. A *brahmana* is not sure to be a *brahmana* always. After this birth he may go down again to the lowest position and then again come back up *(abrahma bhuvanal lokah, punar avartino)*. This *sattva-guna*, *rajo-guna* and *tamo-guna* are interchanging their positions always, but *nirguna* has permanent value. That *nirguna* life may be begun from any position. A *sudra* may begin that *nirguna* life, a *brahmana* also may: anyone may do or anyone may not do. Those who do not will revolve in this *guna-maya*, going up and coming down. Exploiting means getting loan and becoming heavy. That heaviness takes him down. Then, in the downward position he is being exploited and thereby the loan becomes cleared: he is made light and goes up. In this way he is coming and going: exploiting and being exploited. It is a vicious circle. To get *nirguna* is to get out of that circle.

tasyaiva hetoh prayateta kovido
na labhyate yad bhramatam upary adhah
tal labhyate duhkhavad anyatah sukham
kalena sarvatra gabhira-ramhase
(Bhagavatam, 1.5.18)

"Persons who are actually intelligent and philosophically inclined should endeavor only for that purposeful end which is not obtainable even by wandering from the topmost planes down to the lowest planet. As far as happiness derived from sense enjoyment is concerned, it can be obtained automatically in course of time, just as in course of time we obtain miseries even though we do not desire them."

By the great force of time and space it is revolving. But only those who can acquire some *sukrti*, who have some tendency to serve in connection with the *nirguna* plane, they will survive. Gradually they will make themselves free from this vicious circle: free from that force of going up and down, up and down.

Question: I understand that in the *varnasrama-dharma* system even a *sudra* must follow regulative principles.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: By that he may attain the *rajasik* plane and gradually to the *sattvik* plane: But this is all *guna-maya*. *Nirguna* is something else.

A *brahmana* may have some facility, but in spite of that he may not connect with *nirguna*. He may go to Brahmaloka but he will remain within this material plane. The connection with *nirguna* is independent of this *varnasrama*. There is *asura-varnasrama* and *daiva-varnasrama*; the classification of two *varnasramas*. Where there is recognition of the highest, *nirguna*, that is called *daiva-varnasrama*. And where there is consideration of the flesh in this *guna-mayi-jagat*: the good and bad within the misconceived realm, the standard of misconception, that is called *asura-varnasrama* .

From the standpoint of the absolute consideration when *varnasrama* is connected with *nirguna* , then that is really helpful, otherwise not.

Question: Can we say that there is some facility for eating meat within the *varnasrama* system?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes, but that is *saguna*. *Saguna*, it is within the mundane nature. We take the flesh of the beast but some *mantram*, some regulation, some deity, some particular company, association; all these things are involved. And what will that do? We are using his flesh, and the soul of the beast will get something from our merit. So, it is not proper, but it is not such a brutal violence. It is modified violence and the soul of the animal will be compensated in the next life according to the method in which he is killed. But those who are taking advantage of his flesh are not devotees. They are ordinary men and they will get ordinary *sattvik* or *rajasik* result. There is no touch of devotion proper there. No touch of *nirguna*.

But in the Vaisnava section, according to *sastra* the vegetables can be offered to Narayana. Those vegetables offered to Narayana will be elevated automatically. And those who are giving, who are offering, and, for the service are taking that *prasadam*, for them there is no harm. They will be elevated by taking that *prasadam* So in the Vaisnava conception both the eater and the eaten, all are going up because they are coming in connection with that highest good-will. But that is not the case with other 'goodness".

'dvaite' bhadrabhadra-jnana, saba - manodharma'
'ei bhala, ei manda', - ei sabe 'bhrama'
(Chaitanya charitamrita, Antya 4.176)

In the world of misconception the plane is misconceived, so what real benefit, good or bad, may be there? Ultimately all is false, as in a dream. So whether it is a good dream or a bad dream, there is not much difference there. In such a plane of unreality, to consider some thing to be good and another thing to be bad is all based on falsity, misconception.

Question: If an animal is killed must that soul come again in the same species?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Not always. The results of his previous actions will come forward. After the marriage of Devaki to Vasudeva, Kamsa, as a charioteer, is taking Devaki and Vasudeva to her father-in-law's house. At that time some sound came from the sky saying, "You are relishing this marriage, but the eighth son of your sister will be your killer!" And suddenly Kamsa jumped and took his sister by the hair and was about to behead her. Then Vasudeva came to oppose him; "What are you doing? You are a hero, and you are killing your sister? Being afraid for your life you stoop so low!" In this way on that occasion there was some talk and in course of that Vasudeva said, "Before one dies, birth begins."

Birth, rebirth, begins before one's death. Why! How is it possible? The next birth begins before his death because the past *karmas* come to take their satisfaction. Each one comes with its demands. All tendencies come to get the next chance, the first chance. It is automatically decided in some computer-like way, and when the body is left the subtle body captures the soul and takes it. He may go anywhere and everywhere as the consequence of his previous actions. In the shape of idea the consequences come to take possession.

So after a human birth one may go down to be a tree. Even by living in accordance with the *varnasrama-dharma* system we also find that some *deva* is coming to be a stone or a tree in his next life; all these things are happening. So when one dies it may be possible, but it is not sure, that a *brahmana* will again be a *brahmana* in his next birth. If he has done some previous bad action then that may take him to the worst position, whereas a *candala* who is finishing his lowest form of life may come to be a *brahmana* at once. According to *karma*, and the intensity and priority of the *karma* , the results have their effects.

Chapter Four

With Sincerity to Safety

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Pure means God-interested. In one's innate nature God's interest is present. Only God's interest is the innate tendency and when that is uncovered we can see everything as it is. There everything is doing the service of the Absolute and everything is all right. The only anomaly arises when we want to see the Absolute as my servant or I want to non-cooperate with Him *(bhuki-mukti-sprha)*. These are two kinds of misconceptions but really everything is meant for serving Him and I am also a servant included within that jurisdiction. I am a servant. My duty is to use myself cent-per-cent to serve Him. Service is the truth. Service, not of the nation or society or land or country, but service of the Absolute: that is truth. Only misconception has come to deviate us from that vision and so cause our suffering. It is something like disease. We are attacked by a disease of exploiting tendency or renouncing tendency. The duty of every *jiva* soul is to be an inseparable organic unit to serve and to work for the interest of the organic whole. That is the basic idea.

Question: Does each unit have an eternal relationship with the whole which is not the same as that of another unit?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: They are individuals, but in consonance. There is some sympathetic relation between them. There are groups also according to the nature of service: *dasya*, *sakhya*, *vatsalya* and *madhurya*. There are so many groups and they are sympathetic. Sometimes there also may be fighting with the opposition, but that is also service!

Question: Can you explain further of what you mentioned recently, that in the devotee's quest to become pure he must go through numerous situations where he is accepting something higher and rejecting something lower: eliminating the lower conception and accepting the higher conception?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Those are different stages of that misunderstanding, different strata. *Sadhana* means progress which means eliminating something and inviting something higher. In this way the process is there and that may be quick in a certain case and slow in another. It may be slow or rapid but we are to pass through different stages according to the intensity of illusion.

Question: What is the determining factor as to whether we pass through such a stage slowly or quickly?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That will depend upon the *sukrti* and the *sat-sanga*. There will be some conscious help and some previous underground help. *Ajnata-sukrti* is when unconsciously unknown benefit has come to me. Whereas *jnata-sukrti* is when consciously some benefit comes through the association of the *sadhu*, the saint. And that *sadhu* also may be of different types.

Question: I don't understand. The *sadhu* may be of different types?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: There are different types of *sadhus*. We have freedom of cooperation and association with a particular section and the outcome of that depends also on the quality of whom we associate with.

Question: So spiritual life is one where we are accepting a new concept and eliminating old concepts?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: There is classification of misconception: *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, *Svah*, *Mahah*, *Janah*, *Tapah* and *Satya*. There is so much gradation within the plane of misconception. And within that there are so many subdivisions such as insects, trees, animals, etc. But at the same time we shall think that a tree might have advanced in the *nirguna* whereas a man might not. Misconception may be so hopelessly peculiar in a man that it will take time to cure him. At the same time, the mental system of a tree or an animal may be more advanced towards service, though its present situation is very lamentable.

Question: Does the acceptance and elimination of concepts include *sadhu-sanga* , that we accept and eliminate there also?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes. In *sadhu-sanga* there are so many considerations: the type of *sadhu*, the cooperating tendency, also the backing of previous *sukrti*. There are many things to be taken into calculation.

adhistanam tatha karta, karanam ca prthag-vidham
vividhas ca prthak cesta, daivam caivatra pancamam
(Bhagavad-gita, 18.14)

With the help of these five factors, all actions are effected: "The body, ego (in the form of the knot of spirit and matter), the separate senses, the different endeavors, and destiny, or the intervention of the Supreme Universal Controller."

It is not that just one incident is the cause but there are so many circumstantial things coming together that cause a particular event. Any event is the combination of many things: his free-will, his previous background, his present association, his nature: all these things have got their contribution for his progress. Circumstance can contribute much. It is not limited only to the free-will of the man who wants progress.

Question: What about *Vaisnava aparadha*, offenses to the devotees ?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: If that is underground that will vehemently oppose his progress. In a particular circumstance many things may be more or less important that will arrest or help his progress.

Question: One cannot say which factor is more important because each situation is different?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It is generally told that when one has come to such a position that he accepts the Vaisnava as all in all then the ordinary duties to the worldly environment will lose their importance. At that stage the importance should be given to the finer circumstances relating

to where I am really wanting to enter into. The sympathy or apathy of those who are in power will have much effect, whereas the sympathy and apathy of those in a lower position will be of less-value. That is natural common sense. I may want progress, but if the higher officials are non-sympathetic then that will be a great hindrance. But if the lower people who are under me have some complaint then that will not matter much. So Vaisnava and Visnu will be given the highest consideration and I must take care not to commit any offense and not to incur any displeasure from Them. Our extra attention should be given to that.

Question: Is the guru-disciple relationship above this acceptance and elimination process?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Sometimes we may see this happen but that is the most unfortunate thing ever one may have to forego. If any wrong is found in whom I want to depend foremost then that will be a great misfortune and setback. The greatest setback is to eliminate guru. But to be sympathetic with our gurudeva and after his departure if we take help of the closer association then that is not to dismiss the guru. Rather, that will help us to serve more our gurudeva. After the departure of guru I shall try to get the help of those who are of higher type. Therefore if I could get help from any of his friends, then of course that is not bad. Rather that is good because I am getting impetus to make my progress more quickly, and my progress will not be checked for want of any favorable advice about the ways and means.

The danger arises when guru is alive and for any reason I am to leave him. That is of course a very dangerous thing and there also we find the relative consideration and the absolute consideration going side by side. When they are going side by side, the absolute consideration must get the upper hand. We may be misguided and so it is easy to change the guru from non- *Vaisnava* to *Vaisnava*, from *saguna* to *nirguna* . But in the *nirguna-viveka*, in the same plane, if we are to change guru during the lifetime of guru then that we must consider as a grave and serious thing. Sometimes such a disaster may fall on some disciple.

There are also the so-called *Vaisnava* gurus who have left the proper line but who profess themselves to be in the *Vaisnava* school. They came perhaps with some sincerity but became influenced by bad association and so they changed their faith. These are very complicated things, but differentiation is possible. And when it is clearly differentiated that such an unfortunate situation exists, then the disciple must take certain steps. It is possible also that, broken-hearted, one may take the risk of giving up the possibility of making any progress in this life. Without progress, broken-hearted, he lives thinking, ''My choice has been wrong and my attempt in this life has been thwarted and that is my misfortune However, at least seeking the help of the Supreme Lord, I shall have some hope that in my next life I may find that real thread of progress."

But there may be someone of strong understanding who can change his path from here to there. Especially this may be so if any incidental ignorance had covered him for the time being and that has now passed away so that he can see clearly what is what. He may consider, "I have purchased a through-ticket but when making some progress I have come to understand that there are some hindrances on the line. Therefore, from this juncture I can accept another train on another line in order to go where there is no danger." If it becomes clear that ahead there is some danger, then although a ticket was purchased to go through on this line the necessity then arises to get down from the train at a junction and accept another line to reach the goal. It is quite possible this consideration may arise if things occur in such way.

Alternatively, someone may consider that he has purchased a ticket and therefore he must go on along that line. But the absolute consideration is that, "I want to go to that destination, and I am going for that purpose. So, if on the way I am to find that there is some difficulty then I am to change my course." This is common sense.

partha naiveha namutra, vinasas tasya vidyate
na hi kalyana-krt kascid, durgatim tata gacchati
(Bhagavad-gita, 6.40)

For one who is sincere in his activity he need not be afraid of anything because the Lord is the guide. Through gurudeva also the inner guide is He. By His direction all these things are being done. The final touch of hand is with the Supreme.

There is also the consideration of association, *sanga*. Suppose I have purchased a ticket and am going smoothly towards the destination but some *asat-sanga* , some bad association, comes to me. Some mischief monger or some ignorant person may say, "No, no, there is danger ahead so let us get down." I may be influenced by that, falsely. This also may happen that by bad association sometimes Someone may be led to reject a good guru.

Also it may happen that I have purchased my ticket but there comes some doubt, I am perplexed and get down. But ultimately I see that I have done wrong: that I have committed a great wrong. That also may be. Anyhow, our sincere hankering after the truth will come to our rescue, and that sincerity of hankering depends again on the past *sukrti*. The type and the quality of help that was injected into me in my unconscious stage will come to help me always. From the background that will come to dictate to me, "Do this, do this!" Sincerity is necessary.

Any event is a combination of many things. But those that are sincere, that are eager to help their own self really, they cannot be misguided for long. That should be our solace, our consolation. "If I do not like to be a party to deceive myself then none can deceive me in this world." That fairness of mind one should have, because the vigilant eye of the Absolute is always there. We must have such confidence and such faith that the vigilant eye of the Supreme is everywhere. I may not see that, but He is my best friend and only I want to come to Him and He knows it. So, to Whom I am going, He is looking at everything although I may not. The Absolute is the absolute possibility. The finite is to go to meet the Infinite! It is the most audacious, the most impossible thing, and we are going to make it possible by our inner urge. Our inner urge, that is everything.

Question: So the calculating mentality may not be our best friend?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It may not be of great help. Of course we cannot avoid calculation when we are in a certain stage. But still we should know that the calculative mentality may not be of much help ultimately. Prayer is more powerful to seek the help of the highest to whom I am trying to go. If I seek His help, then He will send some agent to me. If I should get such an agent on my side along the way, then I will be more secure in my progress Prayer, prayer and *saranagati.* Prayer reaches to Him only when we surrender.

But calculation may be of the nature of self-analysis: "Here I have nothing, I have no power, so how can I be lifted? My knowledge and my judgment are futile and have got no power. My free will, my judgment, my everything is so meager. So how can it come in contact and make some progress regarding the infinite? This is impossible!" In this way self-analysis will take us to surrender.
Surrender and prayer will be of primary importance to any spiritual student. *Saranagati* means surrender. As much as we make surrender towards Him our prayer will be genuine. When I shall I see myself as clearly helpless then only will my prayer be substantial and then the help will come accordingly.

On the whole there is only one most important factor. *sadhu-sanga*. So many things are all interdependent but first importance is to be given to *sadhu-sanga*. But *sadhu-sanga* is also affected by the results of so many previous events. So many things are all interdependent but still some points have been given more stress. More importance has been given to firstly *sadhu-sanga*, then *sastra*, then *saranagati*, then prayer. Though many things are there, a complex and interdependent interhelp, but still if we are to select some principle thing for our help the first thing will be *sadhu-sanga*, association with those more advanced than myself, and next importance will be given to the *sastra* , the advices of the great *sadhus*. With these two we shall take practical steps in *saranagati. Saranagati* is real when it is sincere. And sincerity means, "I am helpless. By self-analysis I am helpless." As much as I consider myself to be helpless my prayer to the Lord will be accordingly intense, and the help from that side will come to that degree.
Sanga means serving attitude, not physical contact but serving. Higher things can be contacted only through the relationship of serving tendency, not otherwise.

Question: Therefore is prayer a more benedicting activity?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Prayer also should be pure. "O Lord give me my bread!" is also a prayer. And another type of prayer is, "Please save me, I do not know what is my real interest. Please enlighten me." There are so many different types of prayer and how we pray is determined by our association and our spiritual advice.

Question: Is praying for the revelation of the Absolute more important than glorification of the Absolute?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes. "Please You reveal within me what truth is, who am I, where am I, what is my goal of life and how to reach there. Why am I suffering? I do not know how to get out of this miserable life, so please help me. I do not know, but only I can guess that You are goodness, ecstasy and happiness. I want you. I am much tired of my present situation, I cannot tolerate it any longer. Please take me up."

Question: Should that type of prayer be given more importance and stressed more than the glorification of the Absolute?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The prayer to the highest degree that we find is: "I want Your connection. You may utilize me. You may think me to be Yours and keeping me in Your connection utilize me according to Your sweet will. I have no particular claim nor aspiration that I must attain this or that, but only I want to be Your faithful servant and so You please utilize me in any way You like. Only that inseparable connection with You I want. I am Your slave: I want to be Your

slave. Your connection I want: Your sincere connection, and You know best what connection that is. I do not know what is what, but You know what is best. Only consider me as Your own and utilize me." That should be the nature of our prayer.

Question: Should we have a desperate mood?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Desperate? That will depend on the particular disciple. As much sure a conception he gets of his high prospect he becomes desperate to that degree. Surrender means to be desperate, "Whatever may come let it come, but I surrender to You. I have got such confidence in you. I am surrendering to You, and if any revolting forces of the environment come to attack me then I am to tolerate that."

An example is Prahlada Maharaja who received so many tortures even from his so-called near relative, his father. There are several similar examples. If you are *saranagata*, surrendered, to Him then you may have to suffer many things because of that and if you don't become desperate then you will have to come back. With a desperate mentality you are to tolerate all the tortures that will come against you and still you won't budge an inch from your path of progress. That must be.
We must be prepared for any injury in any event. Anything may come, known or unknown, supposed or unsupposed. Anything may come but we are to remain strong in our position. Fixing our eye on Him, it is worth suffering from all types of pains. To stand because, "I am standing for the Truth," will be my solace.

Even in political matters we find that when one is made captive he must be prepared for any sort of torture. Perhaps for earning money, the spy is also working by wandering in the enemy's land, but, if detected, he may have to face all kinds of torture. No risk, no gain! If for the Truth, if for my endeavor to meet the Truth, so many opposing forces revolt against me, then what to do? I shall stand with my head erect: "I am not doing anything wrong." At the same time, like Christ, one should pray, "O Father, they know not what they do, forgive them. They do not know what wrong things they are doing to me. Forgive them."

Prahlada Maharaja advises that whatever adverse circumstances may come to disturb us we should try to not only see them as opposing and undesirable but we are required to see them as quite befitting: "It *should* come and is coming through the will of my good, well-wishing Lord. Very kindly He is sending these apparently unfavorable things to me but here is His grace." We shall try to read positive sympathy in the pain and not only negative opposition. One thing to note is that nothing can come without His sanction, so it is coming to me with His sanction. There can be no spirit of retaliation in Him, therefore the pain has come for some purpose: to purify me. This positive end is there. He is trying to finish the bad consequences of my previous actions. "I would otherwise have had to undergo the bad consequences of my actions for a long time to come but perhaps He is making that intense in order to be finished within a very short time. Therefore it is *His* grace." If with this attitude we can face this danger that surrounds us then very easily we are released from all such opposing forces.

When the mother is punishing her child, affection is in the background. There is no spirit of retaliation, rather, there is the spirit of affection: she wants to correct him. But when the child takes the attitude, "Yes. More punishment is required, Mother. I have done so many misdeeds, more punish-

ment is necessary for me." Then the mother will release him very soon; "Oh, he has understood that he did wrong so he should be released now." The result of punishment is reached and so the punishment should be withdrawn.

So whenever the opposing environment comes to pain us, we should see with such a vision that, "It is the benevolence of the Lord that He has sent this suffering to me, to correct me, to release me very soon perhaps. I am inviting you, "Yes, you come. You come. You are my friend. In the garb of enemy you are my friend. You have come to release me very soon, so I welcome you. You are coming because without my Lord's sanction nothing can happen. So when you have come, you have come surely for my benefit, so I welcome you." If with this attitude you can embrace unfavorable circumstances then very soon you will get liberation from the clutches of *maya*.

At the same time it is necessary to show one's gratitude to the Lord, "How kind You are. You have managed to clear my debt from my previous life in so short a time. You are so gracious. So I show my obeisances to You, my Lord. You are so gracious to me. You are trying to finish the reactions of the long-standing misdeeds of my past life which could take birth after birth, infinitely, to clear. But that has been finished within a few hours, so I bow down so faithfully. My faithful obeisances to You, my Lord." With this attitude he gets relief immediately. That is the key to success.

Question: What should be the conception of the devotee when the guru is chastising him? Should he understand that to be for his benefit?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes. Mahaprabhu says that when the guru is chastising he is considering the disciple to be his own: he has got much affection. But when he is indifferent then he has kept the disciple at a respectable distance and has not accepted him closely. When the guru is punishing then that is a great fortune. One can think, "The vigilant eye of gurudeva is over me and he cannot tolerate anything wrong in me. So that is very rare, a great fortune, a great prospect of my life that his vigilant eye is there so that nothing wrong can attack me and take me down. He is there." That the guru is giving punishment presupposes that his guardian's eye is watching over the disciple. So that should be considered a great fortune.

In the last sloka of his *Siksastakam* prayers Mahaprabhu also says how the standard of attachment should be of the devotee towards the Lord. Here, of course, it is mentioned about Krsna but we will find this similar relationship between disciple and guru.

aslisya va pada-ratam pinastu mam
adarsanan marma-hatam karotu va
yatha tatha va vidadhatu lampato
mat-prana-nathas tu sa eve naparah
(Siksastakam 8)

"Krsna may adore me but, although I think I am holding fast His holy feet, He may also throw me away or trample me down. Furthermore, the next alternative may come that He may be indifferent. He is not coming to punish me, but He may be indifferent: He doesn't care for me. I am nothing to Him. He has eliminated me from His camp and that is more dangerous. He may also be embracing others, showing His affection to others while ignoring me. What one day I expec-

ted to have from Him, the others are enjoying and I am debarred from that. All this show may take place before my very eyes but still I have no other alternative than to hold fast to His feet, to hold His holy legs very fast. I have no other alternative because He is all in all to me."

This sort of adherence to Him we shall try to maintain. "I have no other alternative but His favor. He may show His favor, He may not." In different stages He may deal with me in different ways. He may show His apathy to me but still I have no other alternative. I am to tolerate all the apathetic eventualities. That is the nature of the tie between the man and the Master. That tie is invulnerable, is inseparable, is eternal and, if cut, that separation may not even be imagined: such closer and natural connection we have got with the Absolute Good.
We cannot even conceive of anything other than our connection with Him, and that is the eternal conception. We are to go on in the eternal plane and we are to find out our eternal contact: the finite's connection with the Infinite. The man and the Master. The Lord and the servant. In this way it is inconceivable, but inconceivably true. That sort of connection with the Supreme we shall try to find out, and that is the greatest importance of our existence.

Separate existence is not possible. That connection with Him is there, only we forget that. That is the trouble. And in the process of forgetfulness and in the degree of forgetfulness everything becomes an anomaly. All the anomalies can be confined in this single misunderstanding. The whole anomaly exists only by this misunderstanding.

Chapter Five

Highest Dedication, Highest Gain

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Selflessness means to admit that the Lord is all in all. Even the existence can be effaced by His sweet will. Although we are told that the soul is eternal, His will is the Absolute Will and He can efface me if He wants. The Master can murder the slave. *Marobi rakhobi-jo iccha tohara*, "You can keep me or You can do away with me, this is Your constitutional right. I am fully dependent. You can make or mar with my fortune: anything You like." As much as you will be able to realize your position of helplessness, so much you will enrich yourself from the real standpoint and you will acquire a position there. Vanity will not be allowed there, but just the opposite is required: full humility. Humility has got value there because one should always think oneself to be the negative and not the positive. To have no rights, but all rights only in His sweet will, is *prema,* love. His grace is our existence in that aspect of reality.

The *sakti*, the female, has got her importance in a particular way. It is not that she will go to imitate the right of the male, for that will be her failure. Similarly, the male has got his own particular way of attitude. There is the predominating and the predominated. If we want to assert our predominating self then we must have to come in connection with *maya,* the illusory energy where we are *purusa*, enjoyer. But if we want to approach the spiritual realm, then we are not to be *purusa* , but we are to be of female type, dependent type, *sakti*. In relation to Him we are *sakti*, and in relation to *maya* we are *saktimam*, *purusa*. In *maya* we are exploiters, enjoyers, whereas there we are to be enjoyed. If we seek our relationship with the upper existence then we are to be enjoyed, we are to be handled: subjective existence is there on that side. And here in the lower existence we have come to exploit, to assert, and therefore we are in connection with *maya* and are suffering from the reaction. Here we are purusa, and there, in the relativity of the higher, we are *sakti*, potency. Here in the illusory world we can assert that we are *purusa*, that we are enjoyers, but this is false and reactionary. So, try to develop the attitude of your potency characteristic. As much as you will be able to do that you will have value in the higher realm. *Pranipatena, pariprasnena*, *sevaya*. By submission you may be allowed to enter into that domain, otherwise not. *Seva*, service, means that you have to be utilized by them. If you will let yourself be utilized for the interest of the higher land, the higher plane, only then will you be allowed to enter there. No exploitation for the *jiva* soul is possible in that land, the country of Paramatma, and above, the land of Krsna.

Question: What about the endeavor of the *mayavadis*, the imper-sonalists, to understand the Infinite by knowledge *(jnana)* ?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: They cannot enter into that domain. They are showing their feats only here within this mundane world up to Satyaloka. Then in Brahmaloka they merge and are finished there. Their idea of "*so'ham* "; "I am a part of the highest entity", retains them in Brahmaloka and they can never pass upwards through there towards Vaikuntha. Whereas with the mood of "*daso 'ham* ," "I am a servant of that highest entity", you will be allowed to enter into the higher realm. *nirmatsaranam satam moksabhisandhir api nirastah*.

Question: What is the endeavor of the practitioner, the *sadhaka*, in calculative devotional service, *vaidhi-bhakti* ?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: He is to follow that program which is recommended in the sastra and by the *sadhu* and gradually he will find himself to be in the proper soil. He will find that he is gaining some ground and he will thereby receive encouragement to continue his attempt towards that upper realm. He will get some reliable taste, *ruci*. Up to *ruci* he is to undergo some *sadhana*, some program as recommended by the *sadhu* and the *sastra*, and by that he will get help.

Up until just before *apana-dasa*, the stage of wholehearted exclusive acceptance, he is to take the trouble of *sadhana*. On reaching *apana-dasa*, self-realization will begin and then he himself will stand guarantee for his own activities. He will directly feel, "O, I am realizing a novel type of ecstasy", and he won't be taken away from that position.
The main thing is that we can acquire higher things by service. Sacrifice and have: pay. Pay for it. That does not mean paying in terms of money and other things, but paying in terms of your own self: surrender and have. Give and get. As you can give, so you can get a similar thing.

ye yatha mam prapadyante, tams tathaiva bhajamy aham
mama vartmanuvartante, manusyah partha sarvasah
(Bhagavad-gita 4.11)

"Because there is none beyond Me, they are praying to Me for some trifling things and I also am giving trifle in return, but it will be finished and then again they will be in want. But this is like playing. However, for someone who is serious, who wants Me, he shall also have to pay for that. That price is his whole self, however little it may be. He is to give himself wholly and he will get Me wholly. As he gives, so he gets. Come out with your small goods, your little capital, and you will get hugely in return."

Question: But I am bankrupt!

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It is a good sign. If one is bankrupt here, then he will seek some shelter. If one is really bankrupt then he must sincerely seek a shelter.

Question: Maharaja, I would like to arrange a loan from you!

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: A loan! This is all loan. I am also in loan: we are continuing the business in loan from gurudeva. It is a business on loan. The business in the negative side is all on loan.

yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa
amara ajnaya guru haya tare' ei desa
(Chaitanya charitamrita, Madhya 7.128)

"Whomever you find, talk with him only about Krsna. Try to save him from the desert of mortality. I am giving you backing. I command you. Don't be afraid; take the position of guru, the giver, and give it to everyone." It is the order of Mahaprabhu and He tells that He is the capitalist *(amara ajnaya)*. He takes the risk of the position of a capitalist.

In *maya*, illusion, it is difficult for us to digest the truth that, "I am small." We don't like to digest this, to accept this: and that is the rub. Our inner evil tendency is to capture the right of others, but we are to understand what is freedom. Here we really are accustomed to think that we can encroach over the freedom of others of the environment. That is the disease. Alternatively, the reactionary tendency is to think, "I shall commit suicide, that is, let us enter the tomb, *samadhi*. If I cannot exercise my freedom on the environment outside, then rather I shall enter the tomb, the grave, but I won't accept slavery, the serving attitude to the environment.." We are frightened to become a servant: "I want to be an exploiting unit, but not a serving unit, that I shall give my freedom to another superior hand." It is there that we shrink away and that is the inner defect. By freedom we understand that we have freedom to exercise right over the environment. But why should we not accept service for the environment? Why? We think that we shall be reduced to the minimum position. But to do for others, to become a servant, is healthy for us and there we can thrive. We can thrive by serving the environment, and especially the Lord of the whole. We think that if we render service then we are dying. That temperament, false temperament, has grown within us, and that is a foreign element which has covered the *jiva* proper. It is a bitter pill to swallow.

So what is service proper? Hegel's philosophy is "Die to Live" dissolve your ego as it is at present. Dissolve it mercilessly: die. Die means to dissolve, mercilessly. Throw yourself into the fire and you will come out with a bright self. Learn to die as you are: that mental concocted body, that concocted energy. Take the name of the Lord and die. *Bhakativinoda aj apane bhulila*. Forget yourself as you are at present and you will find your proper self there that does not die. Death is ordained for our existence so give to the death that part of you that is ordained to die, and the eternal part of you will remain.
But Mahaprabhu has discouraged the physical death. He told Sanatana Goswami,

"sanatana, deha-tyage krsna yadi paiye
koti-deha ksaneke tabe chadite pariye"
(Chaitanya charitamrita, Antya 4.55)

"I am ready to die millions and crores of times in a second if that would give me Krsna, but that dying is nothing." This physical death is *tamasik,* it is a very much lower bait. Not only physical death, but real death, the wholesale death, is necessary. Then also I may only get that *tatastha*, boderline stage. But Mahaprabhu says, "Die or not die, go on cultivating Krsna consciousness with the company of a *sadhu*. Go on with the company of a devotee of Krsna. Try to accumulate that internal wealth by whatever means it is possible."

The internal capital can be had only from the *sadhu* . Wherever you can get it and with whatever price you must pay, try to secure that innermost wealth. Not mere physical death or mental death has the reach to take you to that higher stage. You are to dive deep into Krsna consciousness. Wherever and whenever you find someone with such strong attachment for Krsna you must try to secure it from him at any price and that will be the best utilization of your life and energy. You are to purchase the higher thing and that is also at the sacrifice of the higher type of substance within you. You are to have innermost hankering and the transaction will be by the surrendering of your innermost existence.

The encasements: the physical encasements and mental encasements of different types are many: *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, *Svah*, *Mahah*, *Janah*, *Tapah, Satya.* There are so many varieties and types of physical and mental encasements. The many subtle encasements from gross to finer do not end only in Viraja and Brahmaloka but even consciousness has its gross portion in Vaikuntha. But more subtle within you is that Krsna consciousness where the dedication is intense to its highest capacity, and that is dedication to the Autocrat. Dedication there is to the Autocrat, not to a constitutional king where there is justice, but dedication to Krsna, to that Autocrat: anything can happen! The highest degree of dedication is necessary there. The gain is also similar: it is of the highest type. As much as you can risk, so much you can expect to gain. That is, Mahaprabhu gives the direction: "Don't be a miser, but surrender yourself to the Autocrat, the Absolute Good, and you will be the best gainer!" That is His recommendation. So don't be too calculative and don't be a miser. If you find a proper place then give yourself totally *(atmaniksepa)*.

We have come to the proper place to offer our service, and Krsna is the highest bidder. He is the highest bidder in the auction and He will pay most, He will pay so much that none can match His bid. He is the highest capitalist. But He is whimsical and He is prodigal! Krsna is only known and knowable by the higher type of love and affection.

bhaktyaham ekaya grahyah

"By *bhakti* alone I can be approached. Not otherwise. Exclusive devotion is necessary for you to come to Me: there is no other way."

naham vedair na tapasa, na danena na cejyaya
sakya evam vidho drastum, drstavan asi yan mama
(Bhagavad-gita, 11.53)

"In no way am I approachable except by exclusive devotion."

We are not satisfied by ordinary things which are available in nature. We have come to try for our prospect of something so high, so rare, so real. Krsna tells Arjuna:

hato va prapsyasi svargam, jitva va bhoksyase mahim
tasmad uttistha kaunteya, yuddhaya krta niscayah
(Bhagavad-gita, 2.37)

"If killed in battle you will attain heaven, or by gaining victory you will enjoy the Earth. Therefore. O Arjuna, being confident of success, rise for battle." For him to give up the fight would be ruinous.

Our campaign is so adventurous! If we are successful we have got the highest thing, but if unsuccessful then our prospect and our whole life is gone. Gone! With this risk we have come to search for the most precious thing: we must remember this and not go back.
We are to proceed with the search and inquiry, for if He is known then everything is known. With this temptation we have come.

yasmin jnate sarvam idam vijnatam bhavati
yasmin prapte sarvam idam praptam bhavati
tad vijijnasasva tad eva brahma

Try to have experience about the root of everything, then everything will be at your command and in your hand. *Krsnanusandhana*: search for Sri Krsna. What is that *brahma*, that Paramatma, and all these stale things? Krsna is the very gist of them: Krsna consciousness is necessary. Everything is His. He has the monopoly. So, search after Krsna: He is such. He is an autocrat, but He is a thief and He is a cheat!

Mahaprabhu one day in Navadvipa was taking the name, " *Gopi*, *Gopi, Gopi* ." One gentleman who was from the so-called educated class of that time objected saying "O Pandit, O Nimai Pandit, why do You take the name of " *Gopi, Gopi*, *Gopi* "? That recommendation has not been found in any *sastra* but we have found the name of Krsna in some scriptures and there it is told that some sort of good effect may be expected by chanting that. So You may take the name of Krsna, but why do you take the name of " *Gopi, Gopi*, *Gopi*?“ It is out of all the scriptures. Are You mad? What do You do wasting Your time? You are a brilliant scholar but what is Your degradation, Your deplorable degradation?"

Mahaprabhu was in a mood: "Who will take the name of Krsna? He is a traitor! Just see how He has treated the gopis! With so much sincere love they approached Him, but then He was so cruel that He left them and went away leaving them crying. Who will take the name of Krsna? You have come to canvass Me for the party of Krsna and so I shall teach you a lesson!" And Mahaprabhu went to beat that gentleman with a stick.

That man thought Mahaprabhu to be stark mad. He thought Nimai Pandit to be finished, totally mad, and ran away. Returning to his own group he told, "Nimai Pandit came to strike me with a bamboo stick. Now we must have to teach Him a good lesson. Mahaprabhu said, "Don't take the name of Krsna, He is very cruel, a treacherer. He gives hope to His servitors, then flies away. So don't go that side. We shall rather worship the *gopis* who can give but cannot come back. They can approach to us but they do not know to come back, to retrace. We must worship them!"

The foremost *gopi* is Radharani. She is the highest giver, the highest dedicator. None can venture to come beside Her except Vrajendranandana. She is *Mahabhava-svarupini* . Sacrifice at its zenith is there: the highest standard ever is eternally represented there. Nowhere else is there such sacrifice, self-giving, self-surrendering. It is beyond all standards ever known to the world of scriptures.
Laksmidevi has no place near Krsna, and similarly Narayana also cannot approach towards Radharani, nor even Dvarakesa, Mathuresa nor even Gopesa, what to speak of others.

It may seem that all the *gopis* were of equal rank in the *rasa* dance, but some fine jealousy arose in the mind of Radharani, and after showing Her superiority in chanting and dancing, ect. She suddenly disappeared. She conquered the common *gopis* and after defeating them She disappeared suddenly. Krsna suddenly found Himself vacant. All the source of His energy was coming from that one point and the dance was taking place. But when that very vitality was taken away He found Himself vacant. He searched after Her but could not find Her. He then stealthily left the company of all the *gopis* in search of Srimati Radharani. *Radha madhaya hrdaye tatyaya*

brajasundari. Jayadeva says that so many *gopis* are on one side. but they are outweighed by Radharani. They are all abandoned and Krsna goes out to search for Her. This is also admitted in Mahaprabhu's discussions with Ramananda Raya where it is told that there is a categorical difference between the quality of the loving service of the *gopis* and that of Radharani.

I composed one verse that tells that at every point in *Srimad Bhagavatam* there is the presence of Srimati Radharani because She is the goal there.

yad amiya-mahima srirbhagavatyah kathayam
pratipadam anubhutam capy alabdhvabhidheya
tad akhila-rasa-murti-syama-lilavalambam
madhura-rasa-dhi-radha-padapadmam prapadye

She is the conclusion to be established in *Bhagavatam* by so many descriptions of events, so many stories of devotion etc. The highest aim of *Bhagavatam* is to establish *Radha-dasyam*, service to Radharani, and everything in *Bhagavatam* is preparatory towards that end. But still Her name is not mentioned anywhere in *Bhagavatam*. Everywhere in *Srimad Bhagavatam* every word is used only to prove Her noblest position, but still no name is expressively given there for Her. Krsna is *akhila-rasamrta-murtih*: He is the combination of all sorts of ecstasies, and the main support of that *akhila-rasamrta-murtih* is Srimati Radhika. She is the only support of that *lila* of Syama: the sole support, the fountain of *madhura-rasa* (Divine Consorthood). I surrender myself to the Holy Feet of that Srimati Radharani who is the only support, the gist, the all in all of the whole life of *akhila-rasamrta-murtih*: of He who consists in Himself of all sorts of high *rasas*, ecstasies. She is His only support and I surrender myself to Her Holy Feet.